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ABSTRACT

The validity of resource sharing activities among libraries in Tanzania is examined, and the main types of libraries in the country are summarized with emphasis on cooperation between libraries. Some areas that need cooperative activity are identified as selection, ordering, processing, storage, conservation and protection of books, interlibrary loan and staff recruitment, and training. A survey of the steps already taken by some libraries towards cooperation and some of the problems encountered by these libraries in trying to establish cooperative activities are also included. (Author/JEG)

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THE NEED FOR RESOURCE SHARING AMONG LIBRARIES IN TANZANIA

by

Felix K. Tawete

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THE NEED FOR RESOURCE SHARING AMONG LIBRARIES IN TANZANIA

by Felix K. Tawete *

INTRODUCTION:

In his book "Ujamaa; Essays on socialism"[1] Julius K. Nyerere (1968: p. 106) President of the United Republic of Tanzania writes:

> "The traditional African family lived according to the basic principles of "Ujamaa" (Cooperation). Its members did this unconsciously, and without any conception of what they were doing in political terms. They lived together and worked together because that was how they reinforced each other against the difficulties they had to contend with - the uncertainties of weather and sickness, the depredations of wild animals (and sometimes human enemies), and the cycle of life and death. The results of their joint effort were divided unequally between them but according to well - understood customs. And the division was always on the basis of the fact that every member of the family had to have enough to eat, some simple covering, and a place to sleep before any of them (even the head of the family) had anything extra".

President Nyerere here gives us the principles of Ujamaa that people share their resources. However this quotation is deceptive. It assumes that

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perhaps because of the traditional African way of living cooperation therefore does exist among institutions - including libraries in Tanzania. Or it assumes also that even if formal cooperation does not exist at the moment it may at least be easy to establish one. Far from it. The truth is that there is no farmal cooperation existing among libraries in Tanzania. And although for the last ten years there have been discussions on the establishment of library cooperation in the country, such a thing has not been materialized. The only type of cooperation that exists is the "mutual" type of cooperation. This consists of personal arrangements such as discussions, sharing of information and exchange of ideas among persons who know each other well rather than the formal programs. Each library system in Tanzania tends to be self-sufficient in its resources.

It is the intention of this paper therefore to take a critical look at the validity of resource sharing activities among libraries in Tanzania. The paper tries to look at the following aspects:

(a) The pattern of library development in Tanzania. For any coordination and cooperation to be successful the set of the library system in the country is very important.

(b) The need or reasons for cooperation. Is it necessary that libraries should share their resources? Why?

(c) Areas of cooperation: Supposing Libraries in Tanzania agree to cooperate, which areas need to be emphasized?

(d) Steps taken: Although it is true that there is no farmal cooperation at the moment there are some steps taken by some libraries towards that trend.

(e) Problems encountered by developing countries like Tanzania in trying to establish cooperative activities.

THE PATTERN OF LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT IN TANZANIA:

In very general terms libraries in Tanzania can be divided into the following:(a) Public libraries

(b) Special libraries

(c) University and other educational and information services.

Like in many developing countries including some advanced countries the

establishment of these libraries and information services in Tanzania is in an un-coordinated fashion. This system has led to overlapping, waste of resources and other problems. Libraries in Tanzania like in other countries have developed haphzardly and its uncoordinated way is in fact in response to demand and on the basis of individual enthusiasms. It may perhaps be useful for the purpose of this paper to summarize the main types of libraries now existing in Tanzania.

1. The Tanzania Library Service:

This is the national public library system. Established under the Tanganyika Library Service Board, under an Act of Parliament passed in 1963 and repealed in 1975 "..... to promote, establish, equip, manage, maintain and develop libraries in Tanzania ....."[2]

In accordance with this act, The Tanzania Library Service Board has established a National Central Library in Dar es Salaam with branches in Kibaha, Morogoro, Iringa, Mbeya, Njombe, Korogwe, Tanga, Moshi, Arusha, Tabora, Mwanza, Sengerema and Bukoba. The Central library does the acquisition and processing of all books including those for branches.

In addition the Board has a Postal library service designed for readers who live in places without public library facilities. Book Box Service also exists for schools, Colleges and Communities such as hospitals, prisons, community centres and some other organized groups such as Ujamaa Villages.

2. The Library of the University of Dar es Salaam.

Established at the same time as its parent institution in 1961 to serve the teaching and research needs of the University. Its main function is therefore to organize and develop the teaching and research materials of the University. Its stock is well over 120,000 volumes with more than 8,000 serial titles. The University library has as its branches, the faculty of medicine library in Dar es Salaam and that of the faculty of Agriculture and forestry, Morogoro. The University library has centralized acquisition and processing activities and has established a well equiped technical services division.

3. The Library of the Institute of Adult Education:

Formerly acting as a branch of the University library now it is independent. This library is mainly for Adult education educators. The

subject fields covered by the book collection include; Organization and Administration of Adult Education, Methods and Techniques of teaching adults, Visual aids, Research in Adult Education, Community Development and handbooks prepared for Adult education in Tanzania, as well as adult education periodicals, catalogues and bulletins from a number of countries. This has also established centres in some parts of the country which act as its branches.

4. Libraries of the Department of Adult Education:

Unlike No. 3 above this is a government department of the Ministry of National Education. In conjunction with the Unesco Literacy Project in Mwanza the department organizes Rural Library Services for the new literate adults in the more rural areas of Tanzania. The department receives very little assistance from the Tanzania Library Service in the form of training its library clerks or assistants to run the services. The department has one qualified librarian as a Rural Library expert.

5. School and Teacher Training College Libraries

Sponsored by the Ministry of National Education; they are intended to suppliment the school and college curriculum. Almost all of them have no professional librarians. They are run either by library clerks or assistants or teachers who have little or no library training. School and College heads all over the country are crying out for professional help to organize their libraries.

6. Institute/College Libraries:

These are professional Institutions and Colleges offering Diploma or Higher Certificates in professional fields like Accountancy; Business Administration, Cooperative and Community Development Management; Banking and/or Insurance management, etc. The libraries here include those of: The Institute of Finance Management, Dar es Salaam; The Kivukoni Ideological College Dar es Salaam; College of Business Education, Dar es Salaam; The Institute of Development Management, Morogoro; Cooperative College, Moshi; African Wildlife Management Institute, Moshi; The E.A.C. Management Institute, Arusha among others. Some of these libraries have professional staff and some have not.

7. Special Libraries:

Established to serve the special interests of the parent Institutions to which they are attached. An example of these are the library of the Bank of Tanzania and that of the National Development Corporation.

Ministry of Agriculture, the Agricultural Research Centre, Ilonga, and the Library and Documentation Centre of the National Scientific Research Centre, Dar es Salaam. Also under government libraries can be included the library of the High Court of Tanzania with its branches. The majority of these have no professional staff.

9. Libraries of the Cultural and Information Services:

These are established by foreign embasies represented in Tanzania to cater for their citizens. The main purpose of their collections is for propaganda intended to reflect the publications of their respective countries. The largest of such libraries are the British Council and the United States Information Services (USIS) libraries.

10. Private libraries:

For example mission libraries and those of different societies and organizations such as those belonging to the ruling party (CCM) and the National Union of Tanzania Workers.

The list may not be complete but it represents the different types of libraries which exist in Tanzania to-day. The list also establishes the haphzard, uncontrolled and uncoordinated nature of library development already taking place in the country. This list also establishes the need and demand for library and information services which exists in Tanzania. It also shows the acceptance by Tanzanians that libraries are an essential part of their development.

THE NEED FOR RESOURCE SHARING (COOPERATION) IN TANZANIA:

Cooperation and resource sharing are words which have been discussed among librarians in Tanzania at different meetings and conferences. The question now is not whether one should cooperate rather with whom he should cooperate.

According to J.S. Parker the most important element of cooperation is the "need to establish full agreement between all participants in a proposed cooperative and before cooperative activity begins on the exact aims and objectives of the proposed activity."[3] (IFLA Journal, Vol.2, No.1 1976). Such an agreement is what is lacking among libraries in Tanzania rather than why libraries should cooperate. We have seen above that libraries have been developed haphazardly as and when they were considered necessary. Many of them have been set up simply on the whim of individuals,

more of them being planned and organised without professional advice. There is no or very little coordination taking place among the libraries.

No proper research has been conducted on the need for cooperation however this haphazard development of the libraries indicates some need for them to coordinate and share their resources. The following are major reasons for establishing formal cooperative activities in Tanzania:

(1) All types of libraries in Tanzania with the exception of types 9 and 10 above are financed by government. In fact there are no private institutions (apart from missions) of any significance in Tanzania. The ministries, the University, Institute of Adult Education or any other Institute of Higher Learning for that matter, The Tanzania Library Service Board, the Banks, Corporations and any Research institutions are all supported by government - and in the final analysis by the people of Tanzania. They have the right to expect that their very hard - earned money is spent as effectively as possible. Inspite of this very important common base, libraries in Tanzania have developed independently of each other.

(2) The sharing of resources will help to minimise the mushrooming of many miniature libraries thus allowing for big and good libraries to develop. At the moment the majority of small government libraries are more mere collections of books rather than libraries. The collections are badly housed, badly organized and often dilapidated and unattractive.

(3) There is a need among government institutions that they receive better library services. It is only through resource sharing that better library and information service will be acquired.

(4) Cooperative staff training and recruitment at National level would allow for effective schemes of education and conditions of service which would be difficult to achieve with a separate and independent system of library staff development. This would also allow for the establishment of a staff hierachy and promotion possibilities.

(5) Cooperation will also help to avoid duplication and overlapping of the bookstock. The stock brought into a National Cooperative system would allow for a more effective total use of the scarce resources as these would be located, recorded and publicised. Gaps if any could be filled and available funds used to meet demands made according to national priorities rather than individual whims. In short these are a few reasons to justify the need for resource sharing in a developing country like Tanzania.

The trend of library development in Tanzania has caused activities to

overlap and resources duplicated in a very wasteful manner.

In order that we can understand better how stock and services in Tanzania are duplicated let us examine the various types of library services in just one of the towns or districts in the country. I have decided to take Morogoro, a town just about 120 miles away from Dar es Salaam.

Libraries in Morogoro:

1. Tanzania Library Service:

This is a regional library of the Tanzania Library Service Board which is a government Parastatal Institution with the Ministry of National Education acting as the Parent Ministry.

2. Rural libraries organised by the department of Adult Education of the Ministry of National Education. These are organised by the Morogoro District office of the Ministry of National Education.

3. Secondary School Libraries:

About four of these including one experimental model school library organised with an aid from UNESCO. The schools belong to the Ministry of National Education.

4. Teacher Training College Library:

Belongs to the Ministry of National Education. The centre is for training teachers.

5. Faculty of Agriculture Library:

Branch of the University of Dar es Salaam Library which is a government Parastatal Institution whose parent ministry is Education.

6. MATI Library: (Ministry of Agriculture Training Institute). It belongs to the Ministry of Agriculture.

7. Institute of Development Management (IDM) Library.

A government Parastatal Institute under the Ministry of Manpower Development as a parent body. The stock of the library covers subject fields such as: Accountancy, Economic planning, Business Administration,

Rural Sociology, Law and Public Administration.

Of all the libraries mentioned above ICM library and the model mobile library are the only libraries which are situated at least about ten miles away from the centre of Morogoro town. The rest are within a walking distance.

The population of Morogoro town according to the 1967 census was 25,262 people, while the population of the whole district of Morogoro was 291,110 people. Even if this number has increased it is difficult to say that it has doubled. If then it were possible to effect coordination of library resources in this area much of the overlapping of function and provision of service could obviously be avoided and scarce resources maximised for the benefit of this population. For example, the National library of the Tanzania Library Service Board could coordinate and possibly run all the rural library services instead of the Department of Adult Education. And since Tanzania Library Service has an Educational Libraries Department whose one of its functions is to run children services TLS could also coordinate School and Teacher Training College Libraries instead of the Ministry of National Education. On the other hand MATI and the Tanzania Tobbaco Company libraries could in fact seize operating and their services coordinated by the Faculty of Agriculture library which is well equipped, organised and enjoys the services of a professional librarian. The only library which would perhaps be on its own is that of the Institute of Development Management. With this arrangement Morogoro district would have only three types of libraries i.e. Tanzania Library Service regional branch, Faculty of Agriculture library and the Institute of Development Management Library instead of the present seven or eight types of libraries all of which are doing the same things. Cooperation among these three types of libraries could then be more effective.

AREAS FOR RESOURCE SHARING:

It has been shown all along in this paper that there is a haphazard collection of uncoordinated libraries in Tanzania. Scarce money and much effort is being wasted in the continuing development of independent library establishments. Total book resources are not fully utilized or rationally chosen, ordered, organised, supplied and controlled. Staff of the libraries cannot work as a team and so overall management is possible under present circumstances. As the staff are not members of one library system, training

and promotion possibilities are consistently retained. Suppose planning is much more complicated. There where is some area may not need cooperation there are some important areas which need cooperative activity. These are Selection, ordering, processing, storage, conservation and protection of books; inter - library loan and staff secondment and training. However any cooperative endeavour in these areas will only be successful if it is backed up by a good organizational structure of the library system itself.

Suggested Pattern of library organization

Generally libraries can be organized or grouped by either clientele, subject coverage, function, area or type. On the other hand a country can choose to have only one Large National Library Service with other libraries incorporated in its departments. The grouping by type and the formation of a Large National library system could be the two ideal organizational structures of library services in Tuvaluia.

We have already in Tuvaluia two large library systems which are well equipped, organized with an adequate financial resources and backed up with a well trained personnel. Besides, they are legal depository centres - which means that by law they acquire freely all publications printed in Tuvaluia. These systems are the Tuvaluia Library Service with its Central library in Vue as Saluun acting as a public library system and the University of Vue as Saluun library acting as the Academic library system. The National Central library of the Tuvaluia Library Service Board as a public library system could ensure all rural libraries in the country are organized and run by the Department of Adult Education and the Institute of Adult Education. School/Teacher Training libraries, government department libraries and all other libraries which by their function and subject coverage would fall under the term "public" could be coordinated by the Tuvaluia Library Service Board.

On the other hand the organization of libraries in the Institutes of higher learning such as the IPM, IBM, Cooperative College and Research Centres could form the National Academic Library System under the library of the University of Vue as Saluun. The two library systems could then coordinate all library matters related to their type. These systems would not only save time but would also ensure that all information on demand, and acquirements was coordinated. The following would be the structure of this set up:

(a) Stock of books and related materials could be acquired centrally under the respective National Central Library hence would overlapping and

duplication of materials while at the same time coordinating and rationalizing. This would also allow for more effective total use of the existing resources and funds could be made in accordance with the National priorities rather than individual whims.

(b) Cooperative organization also will not be complete if there is no cooperative structure. This means therefore that the two approved types of libraries if established would have to establish a union catalogue for the whole of their respective libraries. This would help to rationalize book selection. At the moment the National Central Library of the Tanzania Library Service Board has a Union Catalogue for materials found only from the branch libraries. Using the University Library as the Tanzania Library Service Board is as why we can see what ESM, ZCM or Cooperative College Library has. In fact the Tanzania Library Service compiled a "Union list of Periodicals available in libraries in Tanzania" very instrumentally for personal reasons and because of information that list mostly selected periodicals from the University Library = a very important source and valuable library in the country. Union catalogue would help Tanzanians to know what exists in the form of literatures in libraries other than the University and the Tanzania Library Service.

(c) At the moment the technical division of the University Library is one of the best in the country. It has the most modern Xerox machine and photographic services. While the University has a Xerox and photographic machine other libraries including the Tanzania Library Service depend on commercial Xerox available in the country. The Institute of Development Management Library is also now busy trying to establish its own photocopying and binding units. In fact the equipments have already been ordered from overseas. Though this may be necessary for the ZCM it is a duplication of efforts and waste of public funds. ZCM could have used the University facilities if only proper methods of cooperation were established. With the existing organizational structure perhaps only two technical services (one at the University and the other at the Tanzania Library Service Central Library) could suffice the needs of all libraries in the country.

(d) Staff: Of all the issues facing the library profession in Tanzania today, perhaps the most important and urgent is the need for effective action - while pursuing for expansion and training of librarians, to initiated action all libraries in Tanzania have their own personnel and training system for their staff. This has resulted to some libraries having well trained personnel while others are stranded with library

clerks who have little or no library knowledge at all. This system makes it even difficult for some foreign donors wishing to give aid for the training of librarians. Which institution should they give the aid, ... the University, IDM, IFM or Tanzania Library Service? However the two suggested National library organizations could be dealing with the recruitment and training of librarians for their respective libraries and then distribute them. This could ensure an effective scheme of education as well as staff hierarchy. There would also be a nation-wide control of the staff and promotion possibilities - hence motivation for work.

The only library training at the national level now available in Tanzania is that offered by the Tanzania Library Service Board. This is a short course of eighteen months consisting of six months theoretical training and one year of practical experience in libraries. This course leads to a certificate in library studies and qualifies a person for the library assistant or library technician positions. Although this is a sensible arrangement and doubtlessly works very well in many situations it has not been successful in solving national problems at professional level.

An alternative to complete centralized training program would be through secondment arrangement. In this arrangement personnel trained by either the Tanzania library service or the University could be seconded to libraries which either have no funds to train their staff or have no training programs at all. If this is taken then the two large libraries in Tanzania (TLS and University) need to have a sufficiently strong (in numbers) staff to be able to have some on secondment. Secondment would not only ensure a unified staff structure but it would also allow for job rotation and promotion prospects.

Alternatives:

With the present social and economical situation in Tanzania may be it is not wise to have two separate library structures as suggested above. As an alternative to the two types of library networks Tanzania could organize a large Nation - wide library system to be known as the NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES. This then would have subject divisions, departments e.g. Academic or Educational libraries dept., Public libraries dept., Government libraries etc. with library and information service to all institutes, schools and organizations. The National Library Service could be given sufficient funds to plan, build, manage staff, equip, stock and maintain all libraries in the country regardless of their specialities or functions. The National Library Service should have complete overall controll of all

libraries and library development in the country. It is important that the nation's full resources should be made fully available to be fully exploited.

Inter-Library Loan:

The other alternative would be for Tanzania to establish formal inter-library loan activities among the existing library systems. However inter-library loan as we all know it is based on the idea that those having resources loan them to those that do not have. In other words sharing of resources through inter-library loan can only be sensible if everyone will loan to everyone else. If there is nothing to lend then no cooperation; it remains a one side consumption of goods. In fact this is what will happen in Tanzania if inter-library loan is formalized before proper organization of the existing libraries. With the establishment of the two types of libraries then inter-library services could be between Academic and Public libraries.

TRENDS TOWARDS COOPERATION:

The problem of uncoordinated development of library services was seen by librarians and other people concerned with information network since the formal inception of library services in the 1960s. The Tanzania Library Service, for example, since its inception in 1963 began its activities by centralizing acquisition, processing, organizing and dissemination of its stock for its established branches. The Book Box and Postal library services to schools and organized institutions are all efforts by the Tanzania Library Service towards sharing its resources with other people.

All along its life time the Tanzania Library Service has forged good relationships with many small libraries in the country and has in fact become a professional enquiry resource centre for other libraries - especially government and institutional libraries e.g. the Bank of Tanzania and the National Development Corporation. This relationship with other libraries has been more strengthened through its staff secondment arrangements. In conjunction with the Ministry of National Education TLS has on several occassions organized seminars and short courses for teacher - librarians as well as library assistants or clerks for schools and rural libraries.

The repealing of the 1963 Act of library service in 1975 and introducing a more comprehensive Act was yet another major effort by the Tanzania Library Service Board towards sharing its resources with others at a National level. The 1975 Act gave the Board wide functions which included not only

the establishment and equiping of public libraries only but also documentation centres and other information services in the country. It also gave the Board the function of training, promoting literacy compaigns, planning and coordinating library and documentation services in the United Republic.

Tanzania Library Association:

The motivation and impetus among librarians in Tanzania for the formation of a Library Association could be said as another step towards establishing cooperation among themselves. Though still young (founded only in 1971) and its influence not yet strongly felt, the Association has as its first aim to: "unite all persons working in or interested in library work, by convening conferences and meetings for discussion of matters affecting libraries, - their regulations, management or otherwise....."[4] (Draft Constitution and Regulations, December, 1971). It can be said that at the moment this is the only forum where librarians from all types of libraries, Archivists and other information people meet to discuss matters relating to their interests and problems. The Association publishes "SOMENI" (or Read) three times a year as its official organ.

PROBLEMS:

Among the major problems in librarianship both in developed and developing countries the establishment of cooperative activities is one of them. In Tanzania for example, the first query that would be put forward is that of management. How can cooperation or resource sharing be managed and controlled? People would ask. It is also the feeling among many librarians that it is difficult to manage a large National Library System catering for over 15 million people scattered in a country almost four times the size of Britain.

Communication net work can also be a problem to cooperative efforts. For example the postal services are inadequate. It takes sometimes more than a week for a person living in Morogoro to get a letter from Dar es Salaam (about 120 miles away). What would happen if that letter or parcel contains a book which is going to a needy reader who depends on the inter-library loan? Some of the roads to the interior parts of Tanzania are at times impassable.

Human element can also be a factor in determining whether or not the establishment and operation of an information net work will be successful. The idea which is prevailing among librarians in Tanzania is that his first

priority is to build his own library before he can begin to share his resources with others. This is a big stumbling block. Some people go even further to think that their stock is so unique to the needs of their readers that there is nothing or little they can share with others. Coupled with this is the competitive spirit which the majority of us have. Each librarian wishes to be independent and to compete with other librarians. It is the feeling of many librarians that cooperation would probably interfere with their independence and self-reliance. These are some of the problems which librarians in Tanzania face in trying to establish cooperative activities.

CONCLUSION:

Cooperation and resource sharing are words which have been discussed at various meetings and conferences within and outside Tanzania. The need for sharing resources among librarians in Tanzania is accepted as necessary. What is lacking so far is the need to establish a full agreement on the aims and objectives for cooperative activities among libraries.

What this paper has tried to do is to critically look at the pattern of library development in Tanzania in order to justify that there is a duplication of efforts and overlapping of services in the country. Some of the libraries now existing in the country could seize operating if only there was cooperation among libraries. Out of the library pattern now existing the paper has tried to come with suggestions on the organizational structure of library systems in Tanzania which could effect cooperation. These are only suggestions which may not be the "ideal". However they may assist library planners.

The efforts now being taken by librarians towards cooperation is an evidence that there is need for cooperation in Tanzania. May be we don't need to wait until things are formalized by acts of parliament. Let us try to do some of these things un-consciously sometimes. Let us try to reinforce ourselves against our main enemy, ... "ignorance." It is only through cooperation, through the sharing of the little resources we have that we will defeat ignorance and consequently disease and poverty - the three enemies of every Tanzanian.

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